

Town of Rowe FY2012
Board of Health
Meeting Minutes for February 14th, 2012

Present: **Board Members:** David Cousineau, Chair, Angela Foshay and Joann Brown.
Marcella Stafford Gore, Clerk

Call to order 6:00PM
No audience.

General Business

MINUTES

January 30th, 2012 meeting minutes accepted and signed.

WARRANT (s)

Treasury warrant #18 & Payroll warrant #17 approved and signed

Transfer Station

ATTENDANT'S LOGS

Dave read aloud the attendants logs for Dec 31st-Jan 25th; logs accepted and filed.

ELECTRONICS SHED

Dave reported that the shed is completed.

Health Services

NURSE'S MONTHLY REPORT

Dave read aloud portions of the Town Nurse, Sheila Litchfield's report; 131 encounters for January.

NURSE'S FILES

Sheila reported in a memo that Town Administrator, Ellen Miller, requested she retrieve a banker's box from the vault labeled "Confidential Nurse's Files" and that former nurse Diane Rode's signature is on the files she has reviewed thus far. Shelia will continue to sort through the files and keep them in the nurse's office in the medical records cabinet.

NURSE'S WORK SCHEDULE

Sheila would like the board's approval for time off the morning of March 2nd to attend a meeting. Also she requests April 20th, April 23rd and April 25th off to attend a conference out of state. Shelia will post notices on the nurse's office door and in the Goal Post as well as reschedule any appointments for those dates. Dave made a motion to approve the time off, Ann seconded. *Passed unanimously.*

NURSE'S CLIENT ENCOUNTER SUMMARY

Shelia prepared a table that demonstrates the actual count of nursing encounters during the period of Jan 2010-Dec 2011;

The first half of 2011, there as an average of 106 encounters per month (encounters include house call, office visits and phone contacts), since July 2011 the average number of encounters per month increased to 153.3. This represents an additional 47 encounters per month due to the increase of one additional day per week to the nurse's schedule. **The full report is attached to these minutes.**

BENEFITS PACKAGE

Shelia could not attend this meeting; she asked that the board accept a memo in response to some of the questions they have on the issue of her benefit package. The following is some information from this report regarding the benefit package. **The full report is attached to these minutes.**

- The Town Nurse benefit package is pro-rated
- Policy gives employees 11 holidays off with pay if the holiday falls on a scheduled work day
- In 2012 Shelia will be working 46 of the 53 Mondays
- 8 paid holidays in 2012 translates to a cost of \$2,078.08 at the current \$32.47 per hour.
- An amount is deducted each month for the Franklin Regional Retirement System instead of Social Security.

- At this time, Shelia does not receive health insurance through the Town of Rowe. Shelia states in this report that when she requested that that BOH consider an increase to the Nurse's hours it was because the residents needed additional services. Two days a week were insufficient to meet the demands of the job which include medical records, preparing roster billing, completing paperwork, maintaining inventory, writing Goal Post articles etc. She further states that she is concerned that if the work day is shortened, students will no longer have the opportunity to come to the office after school lets out. On her days off from Rowe, Shelia occasionally works as a relief nurse on Tuesdays and Thursdays and a change in her Rowe schedule may limit this additional employment. Shelia goes on to state that if it is the pleasure of the town voters to reduce her hours to something less than 20 per week she would like the opportunity to discuss the most effective options to balance the schedule to benefit residents while accommodating her need for additional employment.

PROS & CONS MEMO

Sheila prepared two tables exhibiting the pros and cons of a 24 hour work week and a less than 24 hour work week and the consequences for both. **The tables and cover letter are attached to these minutes.**

In the letter accompanying these tables, Sheila states that she is dismayed that the question of her honesty, integrity and commitment to the residents is being raised by a BOH member. Her request to increase the nurse's hours to 24 per week was strictly to provide better service to residents, not to provide her with time off.

She respectfully and professionally asks that if the board has a problem with her service, they speak with her directly as she does not appreciate hearing of the boards' displeasure from residents who have received negative calls phone calls from the BOH. She states that she and the board have worked hard to improve the image and utilization of the Health Service Office and hope they can continue to do so.

REDUCING OFFICE HOURS

Dave read aloud a letter from Rowe resident Susan Gleason;

"Please do not reduce the hours of the Health Services for the town. This is a very important service used by residents of all ages. Please work together as a group to benefit the town. If anyone member wishes to work separately and for a different goal, I urge that that person work clearly as an individual and not use the name of the board". **A copy of this letter is attached to these minutes, original filed in BOH correspondence.**

Dave addressed Ann regarding approaching townspeople (whether by phone or in person) on the issue of reducing the nurse's hours. He stated that Ann is not representing the board when she speaks to this issue as he and Joann have clearly stated at several BOH meetings that they do not agree with Ann that the Health Service office hours should be reduced. Dave is upset that Ann is misrepresenting the BOH's decision to leave the office hours as they are currently.

Ann stated that she felt she was not being heard at the BOH meeting and that there was not adequate discussion on the subject. Dave and Joann both agree that that this issue was discussed sufficiently and Ann is unhappy because they do not agree with her. Ann stated that Dave has acted independently of the board, and she denies contacting any residents by phone or in person regarding the nurse's hours. She stated that she spoke on the issue only to her fellow board members, the Selectmen and a call to Finance Committee member Myra Carlo after the BOH budget meeting with the Selectmen had been confirmed. Ann stated that it was Joann who went to residents inquiring their opinions as to whether or not the board should decrease the nurse's hours.

Joann feels that Ann brought this issue to everyone's attention at the budget meeting with the Selectmen by speaking to this issue in front of the audience of residents present.

At the budget meeting with the Selectmen, Ann presented a memo that read;

"It is clear that the employees benefit package as it stands now is not appropriate for our nurse as a part-time hourly employee. We need only a half- time nurse. In September we learned that the entitled/adjusted paid days off (8 holidays, 6 vacation days 1.15 personal days and 9 sick days) add up to 24 days per year. The increased hours come to only 28 days, resulting in only four added days on the job for 28 extra days pay. Therefore, I recommend that the nurse's hours be set at 19 ½ per week. The residents will still have access to the nurse's services three days a week. It can be three 6 ½ hour days or two 8 hour days and another partial day or however the nurse wants to schedule the time. The residents will still have the same access to health services they do now. No additional time is needed. Last year we accommodated Shelia's request that her

schedule be three full days a week, so she became a benefited employee. That added 5 ½ hours to the 19 recommended in the budget. We only knew that the benefits package included several group insurances. Had we known of the days off we would not have asked at town meeting for the extra time. Shelia's job performance is stellar. The townspeople are totally happy with the services she provides".

Ann stated that she wrote and submitted the memo independently of the BOH. Dave feels that while that may be the case, presenting it at the budget meeting may have led people to believe otherwise. Ann stated that she does not want to see the issue of reducing the nurse's hours go to a town meeting vote because she fears it may cause residents to resent Shelia's salary and therefore Shelia. Dave and Joann both agree that the choice may be taken out of their hands now that Ann approached the issue at the open budget meeting. All three board members are in agreement that Shelia's performance was never in question; her service up to this date has been excellent.

Permits

Permit for Septage Hauling for Houghton Sanitary Service approved and signed.

Inspections

Joann and Lisa Danek Burke inspected Maple House on Feb 13th. Joann reported that the Allergen Awareness certificate and a current ServSafe certificate must be displayed. The board decided to issue the permit after review of Lisa's report which they have not yet received.

FCSWMD

Dave read aloud the MRF Revenue Payment memo for Jan Ameen;

The town's escrow amount is \$12,156.50. Dave mentioned that this is the account used to purchase paper for the town and school.

New Business

The board reviewed a list of property transfers that occurred in 2011.

The board requested that Marcella check past reports to see how often Rowe Camp has their systems pumped

Meeting adjourned 7:18PM

Approved:

David Cousineau, Chair

Ann Foshay

Joann Brown



Susan P Gleason

PO Box 307

Rowe, MA 01367-0307

To the Rowe Board of Health

people.

Please do not reduce the hours of Health

Services for the town. This is a very important
service used by residents of all ages.

Please work together as a group to

benefit the town.

If any one member

wishes to work separately and for a differing

goal I urge that that person work charly

as an individual and not use the name of

A. L. L.

Memo from Ann Foshay re Health Services Office hours included in the BOH budget for 2013

It is clear that the employees' benefits package as it stands now is not appropriate for our nurse as a part-time hourly employee. We need only a half-time nurse.

In September we learned that the entitled/adjusted paid days off (8 holidays, 6 vacation days, 1.75 personal days, and 9 days sick leave) add up to 24 days a year. The increased hours come to only 28 days, resulting in only 4 required added days on the job for 28 extra days pay.

Therefore, I recommend that the nurse's hours be set at nineteen and a half ($19\frac{1}{2}$) hours a week. The residents will still have access to the nurse's services three days a week. It can be three $6\frac{1}{2}$ -hour days or two 8-hour days and another partial day or however the nurse wants to schedule the time. This will reduce her time on the job only 4 days a year. The residents will still have the same access to health services they do now. No additional time is needed.

Last year we accommodated Sheila's request that her schedule be three full days a week, so she became a benefitted employee. This added $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours a week to the 19 recommended in the budget. We knew only that the benefits package included several group insurances (health, life, disability and unemployment). Had we known of the days of, we would not have asked town meeting for the extra time.

Sheila's job performance is stellar. The townspeople are totally happy with the services she provides.

To: Rowe Board of Health
From: Sheila M. Litchfield RN
Date: February 13, 2012
Subject: pros and cons

This memo is to provide you with some thoughts as to the pros and cons associated with town nurse availability. It is not clear to me what specific pros and cons the BOH is supposed to explore, so I have created two different tables: Table #1 explores the question of pros and cons of less than 20 hours vs. more than 20 hours weekly; Table #2 explores the question of a Mon.-Wed. - Fri. schedule vs. as Tues.-Wed. - Fri. schedule for the nurse. I am providing these so you can add your own thoughts and opinions to these tables as well. I am sure we can arrive at a solution. I am sorry I cannot attend your meeting Tuesday, and as I've said previously I will be happy to attend a BOH meeting if our schedules can coordinate better.

I would also like to let you know that in asking about other part-time employees in Rowe, I learned that the only other part-time employee who also receives benefits is Sandy Daviau who works 25 hours. The Town policy provides benefits to employees working 20 hours or more; I work 24 hours currently. If it is the desire of the Board that I do not receive benefits, then my hours would need to be decreased to below 20 per week. Previously we discovered that 16 hours was insufficient to meet the needs in town. Also, you need to know that whenever I receive a call at home from a Rowe resident on any day/time or holiday, I respond. When I am away on travel I provide my cell phone number to residents who I know are having difficulties.

I would also like to say that I am dismayed that the question of my honesty, integrity and commitment to the residents of Rowe is being raised by a member of the Board of Health. The request to increase my hours to 24 was strictly to provide a better service to residents, not to provide me with paid time off. I feel that I have provided the Town and the Board of Health a good service and responded to any and all concerns and questions you have had during my four years working for the Board. I respectfully and professionally ask that if you have a problem with my service that you please speak with me directly. I do not appreciate hearing your displeasure with my service from Rowe residents that have received negative phone calls from the Board of Health. We have together worked very hard to improve the image and utilization of the Health Services Office in Rowe and I hope we can continue to do so in the future.

If there is additional information you find necessary, please let me know.

Thank you,



Sheila M. Litchfield RN, BSN, COHN-S, COHC, FAAOHN
Town Nurse, Rowe, MA

Attachments:

Table #1: pros and cons of less than 20 hours vs. more than 20 hours weekly
Table #2: pros and cons of a Mon.-Wed. - Fri. schedule vs. as Tues.-Wed. - Fri. schedule

Table #1

Town Nurse hours less than 20 per week	Town Nurse hours more than 20 per week
<p><u>Benefits</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town provides a good service to residents. • Less costly than the current 24 hour per week schedule • 	<p><u>Benefits</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More opportunities for nursing care to residents • Phone calls to my home from Rowe residents have decreased since additional hours were added to my schedule. • Additional hours requested and supported by residents at town meeting • Nurse has time to do paperwork, roster billing and maintaining office well stocked and in a neat and orderly fashion, write Goal Post articles. • Minimal need for overtime / more opportunities to balance time overtime worked across the work week. •
<p><u>Consequences</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 work days per week were insufficient to accomplish the demands of the job. • Fewer opportunities for nursing care to residents • No time to do roster billing to have town reimbursed for flu vaccine purchases and administration • Many days I had to leave the office with paperwork unfinished • Overtime was needed to complete necessary work • Dressing changes frequently are required more than twice weekly • Limits time available to write for Goal Post, order supplies, write to MD's etc. • Anticipate that calls to my home will increase again • If we reduce the work hours we need to consider a schedule that meets the needs of all ages of the Rowe population. • Nurse will still take vacation and some holiday time off but it will be unpaid. • • 	<p><u>Consequences</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased cost of hours • increased cost of benefits (8 paid holidays in 2012 translates to a cost of \$2,078.08 to the town (at \$32.47 per hour) • Nurse is paid to be away from work 8 holidays days in 2012. (Notes: Town Hall is also closed on those days; in 2011 and earlier when I worked on holidays when Town Hall was closed there were very few visitors on those days). •

Table #2

Mon-Wed-Fri / 24 hour per week Town Nurse schedule	Tues-Wed-Fri / 24 hour per week Town Nurse schedule
<p><u>Benefits</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • calls to my home have reduced • A MWF schedule of nursing service availability balances nicely across the week for residents • Mondays tend to be busy and well utilized by residents particularly after a weekend of hard work and play. • • 	<p><u>Benefits</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eliminates need to pay nurse for Monday holidays (saves money) • Nurse is in the office 8 more days in the year. •
<p><u>Consequences</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IAW Town Policy, 7 Monday holidays and one Sunday holiday celebrated on a Monday require that nurse be paid for time off. • 	<p><u>Consequences</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mondays are an important day to ensure the Town Nurse can followup up issues that arose with residents on Fridays. • I had been receiving more calls at home on Mondays than any other day. • A change of my schedule in Rowe to Tuesdays instead of Mondays would eliminate an opportunity I have for additional employment that is scheduled for occasional Tuesdays. • Schedule leaves a 3-day stretch without services to residents in need. •

To: Rowe Board of Health
From: Sheila M. Litchfield RN
Date: February 10, 2012
Subject: Response to BOH questions regarding my benefits package

This memo is to provide you information requested by members of the Board of Health in response to an issue raised about my benefit package.

- The Town Nurse benefit package is pro-rated.
- Town of Rowe policy gives employees 11 holidays off with pay if the holiday falls on a scheduled work day for the employee. In calendar year 2012, 7 of the 11 holidays fall on a regularly scheduled work day for me and one (New Years Day) falls on a Sunday. State law requires that holidays falling on Sunday must be observed on Monday, which brings the total paid holidays for which I would be eligible to 8 in 2012.
- In 2012 I will be working 46 of the 53 possible Monday's in the year.
- Thanksgiving always falls on a Thursday and I work the day before and the day after Thanksgiving each year given the current work schedule.
- I sent the BOH and Selectboard a memo on February 3rd that demonstrates an increase in utilization of the town nurse services by an average of 47.3 residents per month due to the additional Monday added to the town nurse schedule as of July 1st 2011.
- Between July 1st and December 31st 2011, I worked an additional 24 Mondays and increased the utilization of services by residents by 44.6%.

Costs to town:

- 8 paid holidays in 2012 translates to a cost of \$2,078.08 to the town (at \$32.47 per hour)
- Town employees pay into the Franklin Regional Retirement System instead of paying Social Security. An amount is deducted from each pay check and the town pays a portion too. I do not know the amount the Town is required to pay into the retirement system.
- I do not receive health insurance through the Town of Rowe
- I do not know if there are other benefits the Town is required to pay for my position.

Additional comments:

I was hired on March 20, 2008 after working for the Board of Health as temporary town nurse from 7/6/2007 to 3/19/2008. As of July 2011, I had worked for the Town of Rowe for four years (7/6/2007 through 7/6/2011).

In general, a benefit package ensures that the employer meets legal requirements and from the employee perspective is a significant boost to the overall incentive to remain with the employer. A good benefit package helps to entice qualified prospective employees and then rewards them for good work and commitment to the employer. In general, most employers anticipate that the benefit package will cost at least as much if

not more than what the employer pays out in salary to the employee. This is part of the cost of doing business.

When I requested that the BOH consider an increase to the Town Nurse hours it was because the residents needed additional services. Wednesdays and Fridays were insufficient to meet the demands of the job which include medical records, preparing roster billing, completing paperwork, maintaining inventory, writing Goal Post articles, etc. In particular Mondays seemed an important day to ensure the Town Nurse office was available to residents. I had been receiving more calls at home on Mondays than any other day. My request for the increase in hours was to improve the service availability. I believe that the utilization report I provided to the BOH and Selectboard have documented that the increase in hours is indeed being utilized by residents.

I am open to discussing possible changes to the schedule as you wish with the following concerns:

- Mondays tend to be busy and well utilized by residents particularly after a weekend of hard work and play.
- If we shorten the work day hours, I am concerned it could reduce the office hour opportunities for students after school and for working persons. High School students have gotten off the bus here at the Town Hall to visit the Nurses office, and Elementary students are brought in after school hours by their parents.
- On my "days off" from my work in Rowe, I occasionally work as relief nurse at other workplaces. One workplace in particular only needs me on Tuesdays and Thursdays. A change of my schedule in Rowe to Tuesdays instead of Mondays would eliminate the opportunity I have for this additional employment, and eliminate the opportunity for residents to have this service available immediately following a weekend stretch of days off.
- If it is the pleasure of the town voters to reduce the hours to something less than 20 per week I respectfully request opportunity to discuss the most effective options to balance the schedule to the benefit residents while accommodating my need for employment.

If there is additional information you find necessary, please let me know.

Thank you,

Sheila

Sheila M. Litchfield RN, BSN, COHN-S, COHC, FAAOHN
Town Nurse, Rowe, MA

To: Rowe Board of Health and Selectboard
From: Sheila M. Litchfield RN
Date: February 3, 2012
Subject: Client Encounters by month: summary report from January 2010 through December 2011

Attached please find a table that demonstrates the actual count of Town Nursing visits with Rowe residents during the two-year period January 2010 through December 2011. This is provided in response to questions regarding how the increase in Town Nurse hours has impacted the utilization of Town Nurse services.

In the first half of 2011, there was an average of 106 visits per month. Since July 1, 2011 the average number of visits per month increased to 153.3, representing 47 additional patient visits per month enabled due to the increase of one additional day per week to the nurse's schedule.

"Notes" on the table address some of the questions you may have and I'd be happy to answer any additional questions.

Thank you,



Sheila M. Litchfield RN, BSN, COHN-S, COHC, FAAOHN
Town Nurse, Rowe, MA